Brave New Workshop's Lauren Anderson on mining new laughs from holiday show

LIFE, 1C

Wolves are at their worst in the final quarter. But why?

SPORTS, 1B

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Quietly, Carter crafting staff

New mayor has announced one hire so far

By Frederick Melo
fmelo@pioneerpress.com

Kristin Beckmann said she couldn't have picked a better replacement.

"I'm real excited to hand off the city that I love to someone who cares about it as much as I do," said Beckmann, St. Paul's deputy mayor, shortly after meeting with Jaime Tincher on Tuesday.

Tincher, chief of staff to Gov. Mark Dayton, will soon be second-in-command under incoming St. Paul Mayor Melvin Carter III. Carter is to be sworn into office in January.

Tincher's appointment as deputy mayor is Carter's first official staffing decision since winning the Nov. 7 election. The mayor-elect toured City Hall offices with her Tuesday, introducing Tincher to city council staff and others.

CARTER TRANSITION, 4A

Jaime Tincher has been appointed as deputy mayor.

Melvin Carter will be sworn in as mayor in January.

LION KINGS

Quarterback Case Keenum and his Vikings teammates had plenty to celebrate Thursday: Namely, a 30-23 win over Detroit that gave them control of the NFC North. **Sports, 1B**

Gratitude served and received

SCOTT TAKUSHI / PIONEER PRESS

Norma Vergara prays over her Thanksgiving dinner at Cherokee Tavern in St. Paul on Thursday. It was the 15th straight year Vergara has attended the Tavern event, which began 30 years ago under owners Robert and Dorothy Casper and continued this year under new owners Brian and Molly Rubenzer, who bought the restaurant last summer.

Franken: 'Committed to regaining' public trust

Statement doesn't address calls to resign

By S.M. Chavey
Pioneer Press

Sen. Al Franken, who's been accused of sexual harassment by four women, said Thursday that he's not giving up on earning back the trust of his home state.

Sen. Al Franken

"Let me say again to Minnesotans that I'm sorry for putting them through this and I'm committed to regaining their trust," Franken said in a statement.

He described himself as a "warm person" who has met tens of thousands of people and taken thousands of photographs, "often in crowded and chaotic situations."

He said he's recently learned that at times — "too many" times — he crossed a line for some women.

"Some women have found my greetings or embraces for a hug or photo inappropriate, and I respect their feelings about that," Franken said.

He reiterated his apology and said he's determined not to let it happen

FRANKEN STATEMENT, 4A

Beyond Mueller, congressional Russia probes likely to last well into 2018

3 other panels also looking into possible Trump ties

By Mary Clare Jalonick
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Some Republicans are hoping lawmakers will soon wrap up investigations into Russian meddling in the 2016 election that have dragged on for most of the year. But with new details in the probe emerging almost daily, that seems unlikely.

Three congressional committees are investigating Russian interference and whether President Donald Trump's campaign was in any way involved. The panels have obtained thousands of pages of documents from Trump's campaign and other officials, and have done dozens of interviews.

The probes are separate from special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation. Mueller can prosecute for criminal activity, while Congress can only lay out findings, publicize any perceived wrongdoing and pass legislation to try to keep problems from happening again. If any committee

RUSSIA PROBE, 4A

INSIDE

• **Page 4A:** Flynn team cuts off communication with White House over Mueller probe.

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— Mary Jo Copeland

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